

A plain Answer, with the Reasons upon which it is grounded, to the Question:---*Ought not every Clergyman of the Church of England to oppose a Repeal of the Test Act?*

NO; but, on the contrary it is his Duty by all lawful Means to procure it.

I. IT is incumbent upon every person who is engaged in the Christian Ministry, to take Care that the positive Institutions of Christ neither fail to attain their appointed End, nor be rendered subservient to any other.

II. But as this Duty is perfectly obligatory upon every Minister of the Christian Religion, so more especially is it upon those, who, by becoming Members of a distinct Body of Christians, are expressly bound by its peculiar Prescriptions; and that Body constituting the Established Church, by the plain and unequivocal Injunctions of its Rubricks.

III. Considering the Declaration which every Clergyman solemnly makes, that he will conform to the Liturgy of the Church of England, as it is now by Law established, he unquestionably hereby binds himself, in case any Requisition, resting simply upon civil Authority, clash with one of religious Obligation, to forego the former, for the sake of the latter: For, otherwise, it might be asked, Whether it were right to obey Man rather than God?

The first Reason assigned, is in itself so convincing, that little need be added to enforce it. The Extension of any Rite which hath been appointed by Christ as obligatory throughout all ages of his Church, beyond the positive and express Limits of that appointment, is, so far as it is carried, not only an Extension unauthorized by Him, but a virtual Supercedence of his Authority and an Implication of a further Use in the Institution than he had foreseen.

When the Lord's Supper, which was instituted for the SOLE Purpose of commemorating, till his second coming, the death of Him, who, as he expressly declared his Kingdom not to be of this World, so neither did he ever meddle with the Politicks of it—is, instead of being restricted to its original Design, strained and distorted to a worldly and political Purpose; instead of promoting by its Effects that Benevolence, which is the essential Criterion of the Christian Religion, it is made by its Professors the Instrument of Discord, and employed to rend asunder the very Body of Christ.—What must be our Thoughts of such a Perversion?

Should any Person ask, if a Man who is in a public Office, may not worthily partake of the Holy Communion? I answer, Undoubtedly; and am persuaded that Thousands do so—but it will not follow that *all* do it, on the contrary, Instances are flagrantly common, where many who come to the Altar, would never have come from a religious Motive, nor from any other, but because the Test Act compelled them.—Now, will any one be hardy enough to assert, that the compelling a man to partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, as a Qualification for eating and drinking as an Alderman or Mayor, is to celebrate the Institution according to its Design? I trow not;—yet this is not all—the Gormandizer and Wine-bibber are not alone thus constrained, but the more flagitiously Profligate and the Infidel.

What, for Instance, must have been the Feelings of that Clergyman, who after exhorting those who should come to the holy Communion to examine themselves, and not after the manner of dissembling with God—beholds the Hand of a Collins or a Bolingbroke extended to receive from him the Symbols of a crucified Redeemer, the daily Object of their prophane Derision?—Or, what Clergyman, should Mr. G—bb—n (whose frothy Sophistications of History dished out in Tinsil and garnished with Obscenity, it is now so much the Rage to admire) be again appointed a Lord of Trade?—What Clergymen, I ask, that properly respects his sacred Function, would not shudder to receive 'at the Altar this sneering Christian, as a meek Partaker of its holy Mysteries?

Will it be alledged, that the Rubrick prefixed to the Communion, hath authorized every Curate to reject the Unworthy? this I readily admit, and here presses the Evil of which I complain;—the Curate is bound by the Rubrick to persist in rejecting, and whilst he preserves his Allegiance to his divine Master in so doing, he exposes himself in Consequence of the Test Act to a severe Prosecution, which in many Instances can be satiated by nothing but his Ruin.—Thus, to both, the Table of the Lord is converted to a Snare.

With the Effects of the Test Act on the Dissenters, though I have no immediate Concern, yet I cannot help adding, that the repeal of this Law in Ireland has not hitherto been productive of Mischief, nor have I ever heard a Surmise, that the least Evil in that Kingdom is looked for from it.—If, however, the Dissenters be guided in their Application to Parliament for a Repeal, by mere worldly Craft, they act like the veriest of Idiots, for as a Body, whilst, as at present, distinct, they can act with Effect, but the Instant the Bond which unites them is broken, (like sheep penned up in the midst of a Flock) they mingle amongst those which surround them, and are no longer to be distinguished in the Crowd.

Having thus given my Ideas on a Subject which engrosses the Attention of the County, I cannot help calling on the Clergy to come forward, as they tender the Approbation of their Master in Heaven, and assert *that* Liberty wherewith he hath made them free.—The Cry so loudly echoed of *the Church being in Danger* was in the former Part of the Century raised by an *Atheist* to depress the *House of Brunswick*; but though it then was attended with mischievous Effects, it will now be found a Phantom of no Operation, except on such as have too much Cullibility, or too little Spirit to examine the Truth.—The Church of Christ is ever under his Protection.—*That* can never be in Danger—for we have his positive Declaration, that no Power shall prevail against it; and God forbid any Clergyman should doubt, whether the *Church of England* and of *Christ*, be not ONE.